

REMARKS

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1, 3, 13-16, and 20-22 have been amended, and claim 7 has been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer. Reconsideration of the allowability of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

Features from canceled claim 7 have been incorporated into the independent claims.

Claims 1-22 are pending, with claims 1-7, 13-16, and 20-22 being under consideration.

REJECTION UNDER 35 USC 103

Claims 1-3, 5,7, 13-16 and 20-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Wallis et al., US Publication Number 2001/0051884, in view of Warrant; claim 4 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Wallis et al. and Warrant, in view of Official Notice; and claim 6 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Wallis et al. and Warren, in view of Lipton. Gigi M; "Product traceability: A guide for locating recalled manufactured goods;" Quality Congress. ASQ's....Annual Quality Congress Proceedings. Milwaukee, 1998, pg. 423, 9 pgs; extracted from Proquest database on Internet on 8/3/2004, hereinafter referred to as Lipton. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

The outstanding Office Action would again appear to be relying primarily on Wallis et al. In particular, for the independent claims, the Office Action sets forth that Wallis et al. discloses most of the claimed features except for potentially the sales records of a purchased produce including the purchase number. To disclose this feature the Office Action has cited Warren; briefly relying on Warren to support the conclusion that spare parts orders include such information as the purchase number.

It is respectfully submitted that a patentable difference between the claimed invention and that of Wallis et al. is the claimed purchase number, as defined in the specification and revised in the above amendments.

In particular, the Office Action has taken the position that the claimed purchase number corresponds to a part number, and even particularly cites the present application, in paragraphs [0049] and [0050], to support the same.

However, it is respectfully submitted that this interpretation of the claimed purchase number is incorrect. For example, paragraphs [0036] – [0038] make it clear that the purchase

number is generated at the time of a purchase individual to the purchased product, i.e., the purchase number is not the same as a part number.

The pending independent claims clearly define the claimed purchase number differently from the current Office Action interpretation. For example, independent claim 1 has been amended to recite "sending at least a purchased product information and a purchase number to a customer-terminal generated at the time of purchase particular to the purchase"

The Office Action interpretation of a "purchase number" would not be generated at the time of purchase and/or particular to the purchase. Rather, the Office Action's interpretation of "purchase number" would have been designated well before any purchase of a product and would not be particular to any later purchase. The Office Action's "purchase number" is more related to a serial number or model number, not the claimed purchase number "generated at the time of purchase particular to the purchase."

In addition, the independent claims have further been amended to reference repair status requests, determining whether a shop is registered, obtaining the purchase number when the shop identification information is found in the shop registration database, and sending the repair status.

Wallis et al. sets forth, in paragraph 0050, that "[a] Repairs Tracking document 530 is also provided for To allow the purchaser 75 to view a list of all the products for which a repair is in process or to allow the purchaser to view the status of each repair or to track the repair of a specific product..." The system disclosed by Wallis et al. does not determine (nor suggest) whether the shop is registered, as currently claimed.

Conversely, in embodiments of the present invention, as shown in step S132 in FIG. 11, it can be determined whether the shop is registered. With this configuration, the purchaser can ask the shop about the repair status via phone, for example. In addition, the repair message can be validated by using the purchase information which is know by the purchaser, using the shop identification information which is not known by the purchaser.

It is respectfully submitted that Wallis et al. further fails to disclose these claimed features.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

ENTRY OF AFTER FINAL AMENDMENT

It is respectfully requested that this After Final Amendment be entered and reconsideration given to the allowability of the pending claims, as the above amendments place the application in condition for allowance and in better form for appeal.

CONCLUSION

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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